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Advancement of women: implementation of the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women and of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly

Measures taken and progress achieved in follow-up to and implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 68/140 and focuses on the extent to which gender perspectives are reflected in the work of the General Assembly, of the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions, and of selected intergovernmental processes of the United Nations. The report concludes with recommendations for further measures to enhance the implementation of gender equality mandates.

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Contents

		Page
I.	Introduction	3
II.	Integration of a gender perspective into the work of selected intergovernmental bodies	3
	A. Methodology	3
	B. Quantitative findings	4
	C. In-depth analysis	13
III.	Contribution of the Commission on the Status of Women	20
IV.	Factors accounting for the successful integration of a gender perspective into intergovernmental outcomes	21
V.	Integrating a gender perspective into intergovernmental processes, including in the post-2015 development agenda: the role of UN-Women	22
VI.	Conclusions and recommendations	25

I. Introduction

1. In its annual resolution on the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and the full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, the most recent of which was resolution 68/140, the Assembly has consistently called upon the bodies of the United Nations system to increase efforts to fully mainstream a gender perspective into all issues under their consideration and within their mandates.

2. The present report, prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 68/140 and Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/9, focuses on the extent to which selected intergovernmental processes of the United Nations integrate gender perspectives into their work.[1] It provides a quantitative and qualitative assessment of progress achieved and remaining gaps, in comparison to previous years. The report aims to support the Assembly in monitoring the implementation of guidance provided in resolution 68/140.

II. Integration of a gender perspective into the work of selected intergovernmental bodies

3. The present report is based on an analysis of the content of the reports of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session and of the resolutions adopted by the Assembly at that session, as well as the reports of the Secretary-General to the 2013 sessions of the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions. The same methodology has been used over several years, therefore the analysis of trends gives a solid picture of change over time.

A. Methodology

4. The documents reviewed were examined for evidence of the incorporation of a gender perspective, as determined by the presence of the following keywords: gender, sex, woman, man, girl, boy, female, male, sexual, reproductive and maternal (including their plural forms). Documents with at least one occurrence of a keyword were considered to have included a gender perspective. False positive results, for instance "man-made disaster" or "sexual exploitation" with no mention of the sex of the victims/survivors or of the perpetrators, were discounted.

5. While the list of words selected excludes others that could arguably reflect a gender perspective, the selected words are those most often found in reports and resolutions that address gender equality issues. However, the assessment of the inclusion of a gender perspective went beyond the mere mention of these keywords. Documents that passed this first filter were analysed in more depth to assess the extent to which a gender perspective had indeed been reflected.

[1] The present report complements the report of the Secretary-General to the Economic and Social Council on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system (E/2014/63) and his reports to the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-eighth session on the actions taken by Member States in respect of gender mainstreaming at the national level (E/CN.6/2014/3 and E/CN.6/2014/4).

6. Reports of the Secretary-General and resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session available in the Official Document System of the United Nations as at 13 June 2014 were examined. Where documents were submitted to more than one intergovernmental body, they were considered only once.

B. Quantitative findings

7. Intergovernmental bodies had many opportunities to incorporate gender perspectives into their work. In total, 297 reports of the Secretary-General were considered and 349 resolutions adopted by the intergovernmental bodies whose work was reviewed. The General Assembly alone considered 249 reports of the Secretary-General and adopted 275 resolutions at its sixty-eighth session.[2] As table 1 demonstrates, the number of reports considered and of resolutions adopted over the past four years has fluctuated somewhat, but has remained largely within the same range.

8. At its substantive session in 2013, the Economic and Social Council reviewed 15 reports of the Secretary-General and adopted 43 resolutions. Table 1 indicates that, apart from a decrease in reports from 2011 to 2012, these figures have also remained within a relatively consistent range.

9. The functional commissions — excluding the Commission on the Status of Women, which focuses exclusively on gender equality issues — considered 33 reports of the Secretary-General and adopted 31 resolutions at their sessions in 2013. Table 1 shows that these numbers have fluctuated somewhat more noticeably in the past four years.

Table 1
Number of reports and resolutions, 2010-2013

Body	*2010 reports*	*2010 resolutions*	*2011 reports*	*2011 resolutions*	*2012 reports*	*2012 resolutions*	*2013 reports*	*2013 resolutions*
General Assembly	244	270	249	259	214	257	249	275
Economic and Social Council	20	38	24	40	17	37	15	43
Functional commissions	38	38	53	46	41	30	33	31
Total	**302**	**346**	**326**	**345**	**272**	**324**	**297**	**349**

10. A number of the resolutions have an exclusive focus on gender equality issues. Five such resolutions were adopted by the General Assembly under agenda items or sub-items dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women, namely, resolutions on women in development (68/227), violence against women migrant workers (68/137), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (68/138), the improvement of the situation of women in rural areas (68/139) and the annual resolution calling for the present report (68/140). In

[2] Based on documents available in the Official Document System of the United Nations as at 13 June 2014.

addition, resolutions on the girl child (68/146) and on taking action against gender-related killing of women and girls (68/191) also had an exclusive gender equality focus, adopted under other agenda items.

11. The Economic and Social Council continued to adopt annual resolutions on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system (2013/16), and on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women (2013/17).

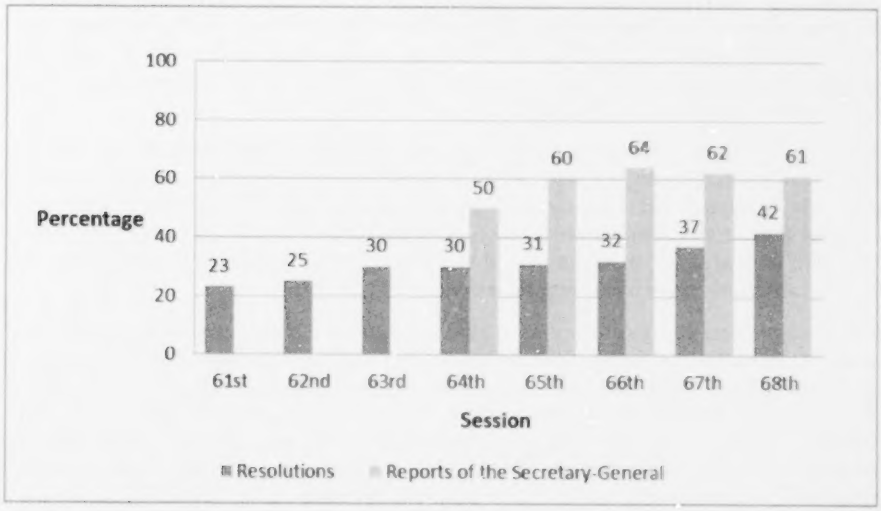
12. While the findings of the present report reveal a consistent upward trend in the reflection of a gender perspective in the resolutions of the General Assembly, progress in the work of the Economic and Social Council and the functional commissions is inconsistent, as described below.

1. General Assembly

Reports of the Secretary-General

13. Reports of the Secretary-General support discussions that lead to the adoption of resolutions by intergovernmental bodies. Of the reports of the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session, 61 per cent included a gender perspective (see figure I and table 2). This represents a slight decrease, by one percentage point, from the sixty-seventh session but remains relatively high, indicating that gender equality issues are seen as relevant across a range of substantive areas.

Figure I
Trends in the share of General Assembly documents that include a gender perspective



14. While the percentage of reports containing a gender perspective submitted to the General Assembly for consideration in plenary sessions remained the same, the picture was uneven in regard to those submitted to the Main Committees. There was an increase of such reports submitted to the Second (Economic and Financial Committee), Third (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee) and Fourth

(Special Political and Decolonization Committee) Committees (an increase of 7, 10 and 5 percentage points respectively), and a decrease in such reports submitted to the First (Disarmament and International Security Committee), Fifth (Administrative and Budgetary Committee) and Sixth (Legal Committee) Committees (by 20, 1 and 21 percentage points respectively).

Table 2

Number and percentage of reports of the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly that include a gender perspective

Body to which report is allocated	*Total reports*	*Number including a gender perspective*	*Percentage including a gender perspective*
Plenary	31	25	81
First Committee	25	7	28
Second Committee	35	25	71
Third Committee	44	42	96
Fourth Committee	20	12	60
Fifth Committee	80	34	43
Sixth Committee	14	6	43
Total	**249**	**151**	**61**

Resolutions

15. A total of 42 per cent of the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session integrated a gender perspective. This constitutes an increase by a solid 5 percentage points from the previous session, and continues the steady increase seen over the past five years, from 30 per cent at the sixty-fourth session to 42 per cent at the sixty-eighth session (see figure I). The increase in 2013 is particularly significant because it reflects improvements in all Committees except the Third and the Sixth Committees.

16. An analysis of resolutions adopted by each Committee (see figure II and table 3) shows that, as in previous years, the Second and Third Committees, and the General Assembly in plenary, were much more likely than the other Committees to integrate a gender perspective into their resolutions. The Second and Fifth Committees, the General Assembly in plenary and the Fourth Committee contributed the most to the increase observed at the sixty-eighth session.

17. The percentage of resolutions including a gender perspective adopted by the Second Committee increased from 50 to 66 per cent; and in the Fifth Committee, from 5 to 15 per cent. Among resolutions adopted without reference to a Main Committee, the percentage rose from 47 to 55 per cent and in the Fourth Committee, from 21 to 27 per cent. Little corresponding change occurred in the percentage of resolutions adopted by the other Committees. In the First Committee, there was an increase of 1 percentage point, from 9 to 10 per cent, in resolutions containing gender-related references. In the Third Committee, there was a slight decrease in resolutions with a gender perspective, by 3 percentage points, from 71 to 68 per cent, but it remains the Committee with the highest percentage of such resolutions. There was also a decline in the Sixth Committee, by two percentage points, from 7 to 5 per cent.

Figure II

Trends in the share of resolutions of the General Assembly that include a gender perspective, by Main Committee

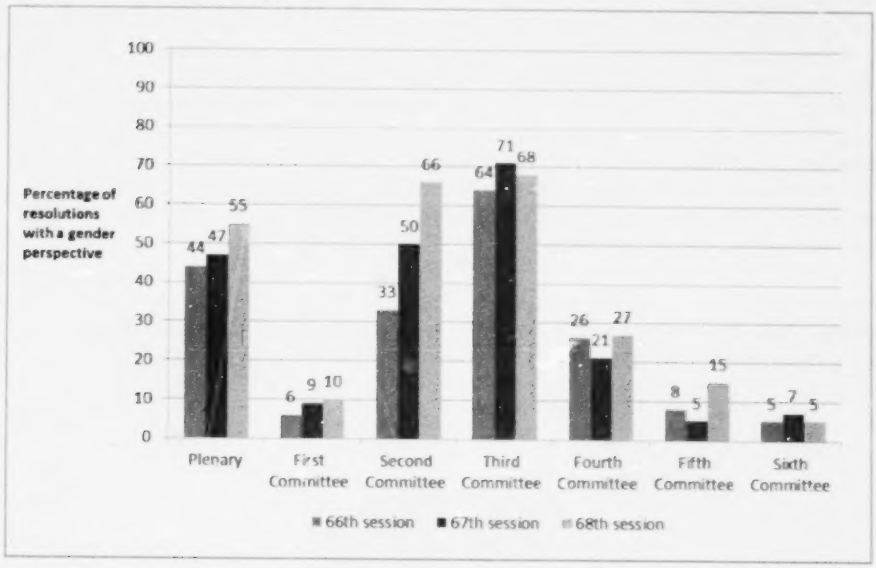


Table 3

Number and percentage of General Assembly resolutions that include a gender perspective

Originating body	*Total resolutions*	*Number including a gender perspective*	*Percentage including a gender perspective*
Plenary	42	23	55
First Committee	48	5	10
Second Committee	41	27	66
Third Committee	71	48	68
Fourth Committee	26	7	27
Fifth Committee	26	4	15
Sixth Committee	21	1	5
Total	**275**	**115**	**42**

18. The picture is further enriched when examining the contribution made by the Main Committees and the General Assembly in plenary to the pool of Assembly resolutions with a gender perspective (see figure III and table 4). Although it was responsible for only 26 per cent of all resolutions adopted by the Assembly, the Third Committee accounted for 42 per cent of all Assembly resolutions that included a gender perspective. The Second Committee accounted for 24 per cent, and the plenary for 20 per cent, of the resolutions reflecting a gender perspective. The First Committee, which accounted for 17 per cent of all Assembly resolutions, contributed only 4 per cent of the resolutions with a gender perspective. The Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Committees accounted, respectively, for 6, 4 and 1 per cent of such

resolutions while contributing 9, 9 and 8 per cent, respectively, of all Assembly resolutions.

19. In order to maintain an upward trend in the proportion of General Assembly resolutions with a gender perspective, the First, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Committees, in particular, would need to increase the attention given to gender equality issues. At the same time, given the sizeable share of their contribution to the overall pool of resolutions, continued increases in the reflection of gender perspectives in resolutions of the plenary as well as of the Second and Third Committees are necessary. Such progress would contribute to making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all spheres, so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated.

Figure III

Origin of all General Assembly resolutions that reflect a gender perspective

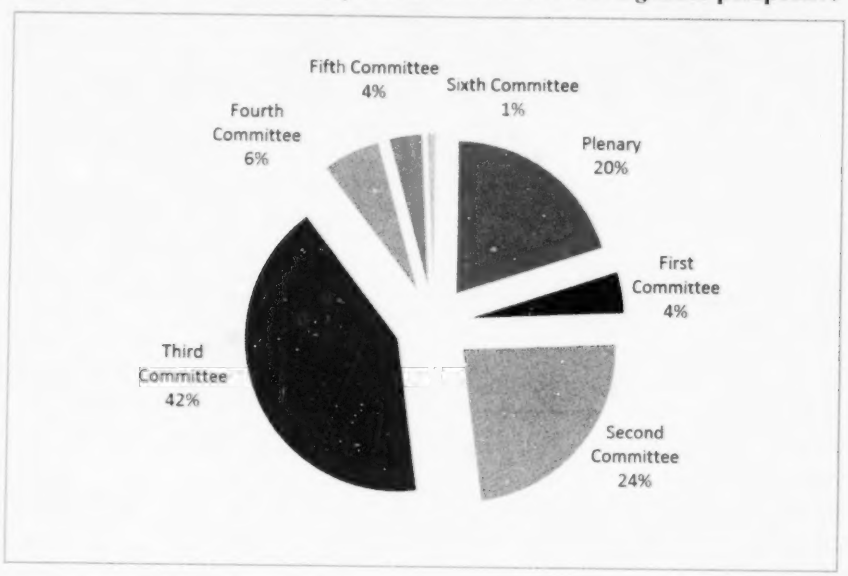


Table 4

Origin of all General Assembly resolutions and percentage of all General Assembly resolutions that include a gender perspective

Originating body	*Percentage of all General Assembly resolutions*	*Percentage of all General Assembly resolutions with a gender perspective*
Plenary	15	20
First Committee	17	4
Second Committee	15	24
Third Committee	26	42
Fourth Committee	9	6
Fifth Committee	9	4
Sixth Committee	8	1

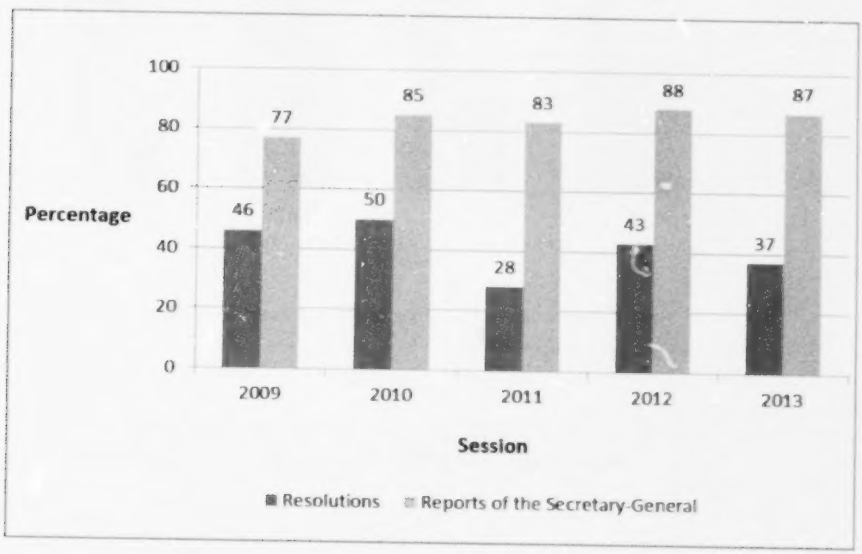
2. Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions

Reports of the Secretary-General

20. As is the case for the General Assembly, the reports of the Secretary-General submitted to the Economic and Social Council in 2013 were more likely than resolutions to include a gender perspective (see figure IV and table 5). Thirteen out of the 15 reports of the Secretary-General submitted to the Council in 2013 included a gender perspective.[3] This figure reflects a decrease of 1 per cent from 2012.

Figure IV

Trends in the share of Economic and Social Council documents that include a gender perspective



21. An increase from 51 per cent in 2012 to 75 per cent in 2013 was recorded in the percentage of reports with a gender perspective submitted to the functional commissions (see figure V and table 5), reaching the highest percentage since 2010.

[3] The majority of documents submitted to the Economic and Social Council originate either from subsidiary bodies or other entities of the United Nations system, or are notes of the Secretariat, and are therefore not included in this analysis.

Figure V

Trends in the share of documents of the functional commissions that include a gender perspective

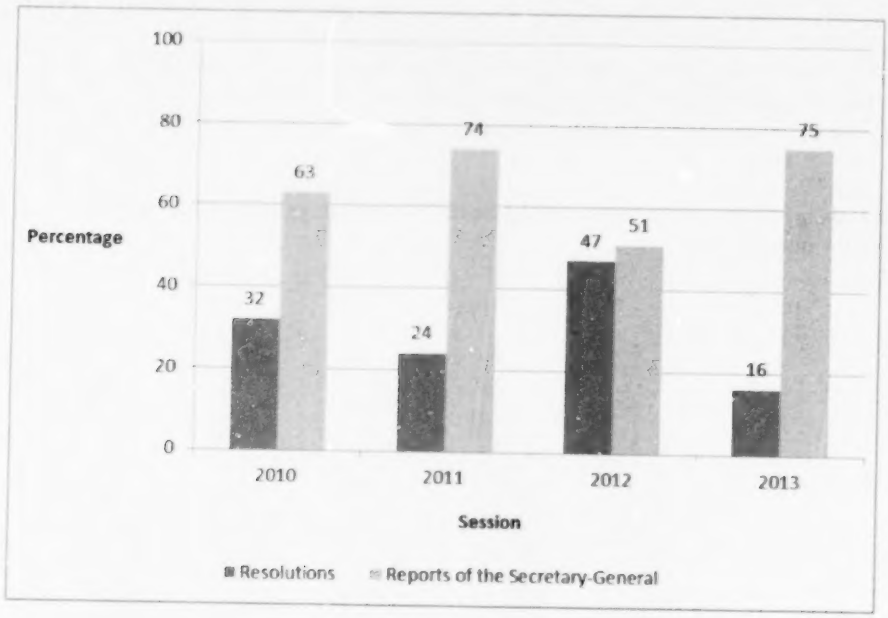


Table 5

Number and percentage of reports of the Secretary-General submitted to the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions in 2013 that include a gender perspective

Body to which report is submitted	*Total reports*	*Number including a gender perspective*	*Percentage including a gender perspective*
Economic and Social Council	15	13	87
Functional commissions of the Council[a]	40	30	75
Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice[b]	8	5	63
Commission on Narcotic Drugs[b]	4	2	50
Commission on Science and Technology for Development	2	2	100
Statistical Commission	8	4	50
Commission on Population and Development	4	4	100
Commission for Social Development	7	7	100
United Nations Forum on Forests	7	6	86

[a] These results do not include the Commission on the Status of Women, owing to its exclusive focus on gender equality issues.

[b] The Commission on Narcotic Drugs considered reports of the Secretariat, which were included in the analysis.

Resolutions

22. A gender perspective was reflected in 37 per cent of the resolutions adopted by the Economic and Social Council during its substantive sessions of 2013 (see figure IV and table 6), reflecting a decrease of 6 percentage points compared to substantive sessions of 2012, when 43 per cent of resolutions integrated a gender perspective.

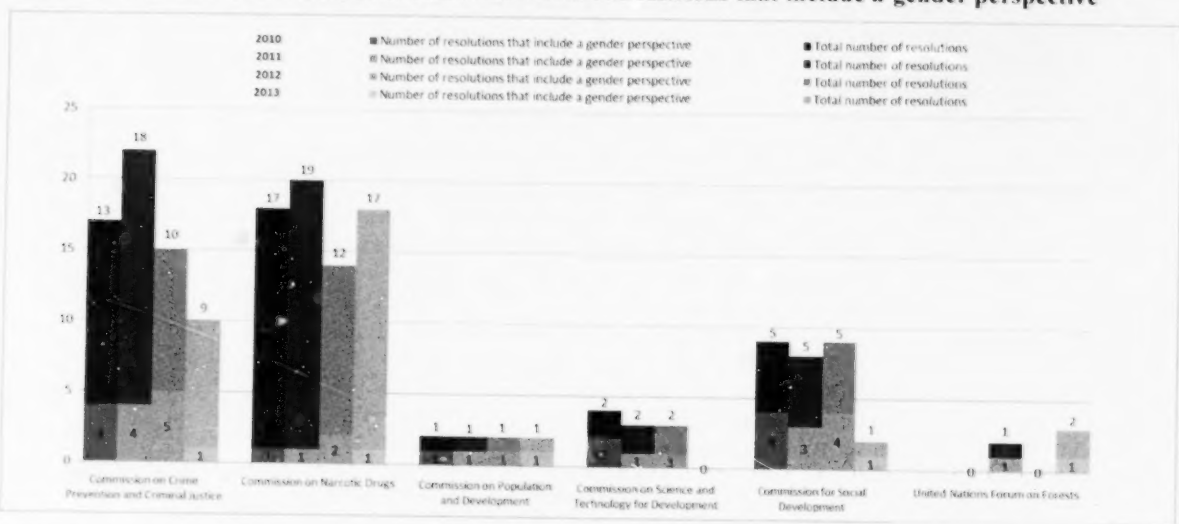
23. Overall, the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council (excluding the Commission on the Status of Women) paid significantly less attention to gender equality issues in 2013 than in the previous year, with only 16 per cent of their 2013 resolutions reflecting a gender perspective compared to 47 per cent in 2012 (see figure V). This development may also have contributed to the decrease observed in the proportion of Council resolutions that included a gender perspective given that the work of the functional commissions is closely linked to that of the Council: in 2013, 72 per cent of the resolutions adopted by the Council at its substantive session had originally been drafted by the functional commissions.[4] The number of resolutions adopted by functional commissions in 2013 increased slightly, to 31, from 30 resolutions in 2012.

24. Figure VI and table 6 provide a breakdown of resolutions by functional commission. The decrease in the proportion of resolutions with a gender perspective observed in 2013 for the functional commissions as a whole is attributable to the very low proportion of such resolutions adopted by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs: 1 of the 9 resolutions of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice integrated a gender perspective, and 1 of 17 resolutions of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs did so. The latter, in particular, reverted back to the status of 2011, when 1 of 19 resolutions had a gender perspective. As these two commissions contributed by far the largest number of resolutions to the pool of outputs produced by functional commissions (26 of the total of 31 resolutions), the impact of their work on the overall results is significant. At the same time, there was a decline in the overall number of resolutions adopted by the Commission on Social Development and the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, both of which have traditionally paid attention to gender perspectives. Excluding the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, attention to gender perspectives among the functional commissions remained very strong.

[4] This figure includes draft resolutions submitted by the Commission on the Status of Women.

Figure VI

Trends in the share of resolutions of some functional commissions that include a gender perspective



Note: The United Nations Forum on Forests meets biennially.

Table 6

Number and percentage of resolutions of the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions that included a gender perspective in 2013

Originating body	*Total resolutions*	*Number including a gender perspective*	*Percentage including a gender perspective*
Economic and Social Council	43	16	37
Functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council[a]	31	5	16
Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice	9	1	11
Commission on Narcotic Drugs	17	1	6
Commission on Population and Development	1	1	100
Commission on Social Development	1	1	100
Commission on Science and Technology for Development	–	–	–
United Nations Forum on Forests[b]	2	1	50

[a] These results do not include the Commission on the Status of Women, owing to its exclusive focus on gender equality issues. The Statistical Commission traditionally only adopts decisions.

[b] The United Nations Forum on Forests meets biennially.

C. In-depth analysis

25. The level of attention given to gender equality issues and the positioning of references to such issues within reports and resolutions provide an indication of the qualitative strength of the gender perspective reflected. In-depth analysis suggests that reports and resolutions often vary greatly in the level of attention they give to gender equality issues.

1. Positioning of references to gender issues

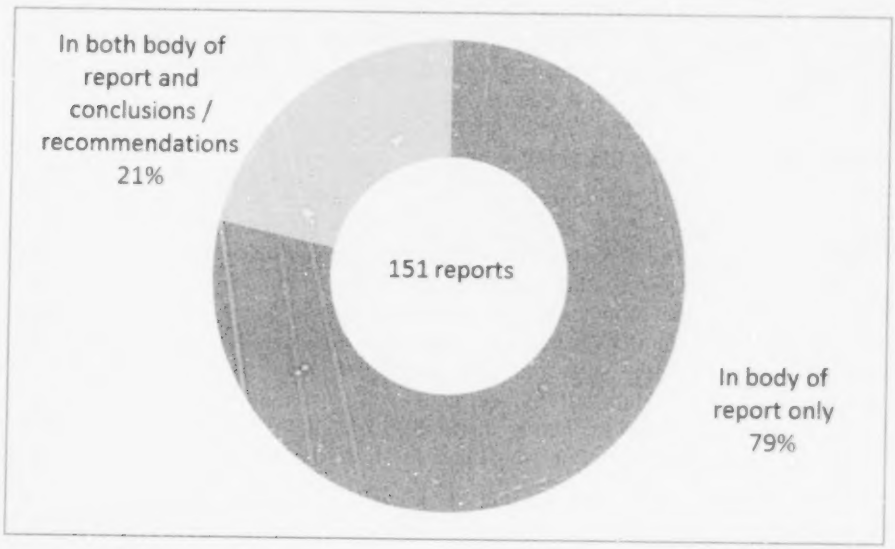
26. The position of references to gender issues within intergovernmental documents determines their prominence and could influence the likelihood of follow-up actions. The reports of the Secretary-General draw more attention to gender equality issues when such references are reflected not only in the body of the report, but also in the conclusions and recommendations. The emphasis on gender equality issues in resolutions is stronger when those issues are referred to in both the preambular and operative parts and when a specific action or recommendation to address the issues is included. This assessment was carried out on documents of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council only, as there were too few reports and resolutions of the functional commissions to support such analysis.

27. An analysis of the positioning of relevant references in reports of the Secretary-General demonstrates that gender equality issues are not yet prioritized systematically (see figures VII and VIII). In most reports that included a gender perspective, references appeared exclusively in the body of the reports, not in the conclusions and/or recommendations. Of the reports with a gender perspective, 21 per cent of those submitted to the General Assembly and 31 per cent of those submitted to the Economic and Social Council included relevant references in both the body and in the conclusions and/or recommendations, which represents a decline of 6 percentage points for reports to the Assembly compared with its sixty-seventh session and an increase of 6 percentage points for reports to the Council compared with its sessions in 2012. The limited treatment of gender equality issues in the conclusions and/or recommendations means that opportunities are not systematically seized to recommend actions for addressing gender equality issues.

28. These findings demonstrate that more efforts are needed within the United Nations to include a gender perspective in the policy recommendations that the Secretary-General submits to intergovernmental bodies. Such improvements could be accelerated by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council explicitly requesting that this information be included in reports to be submitted to them, including in conclusions and recommendations.

Figure VII

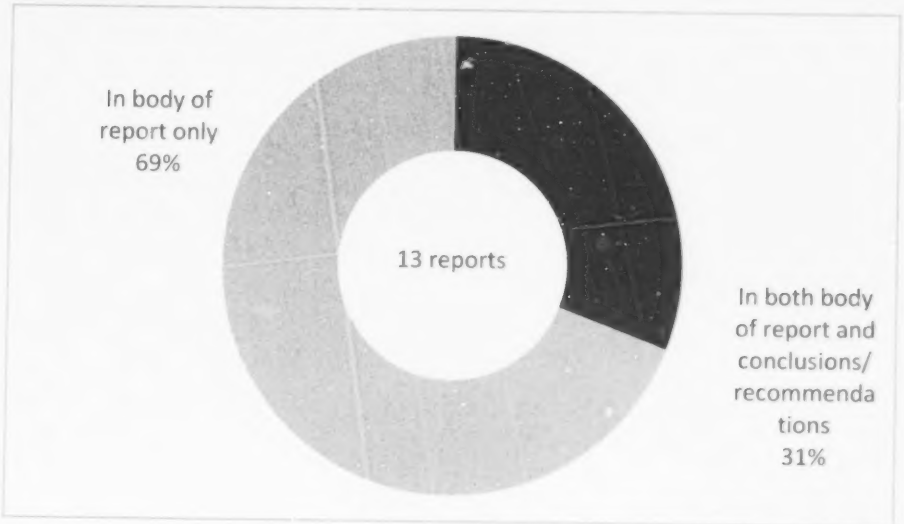
Position of references to gender issues in reports of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly



Note: Of the 151 reports of the Secretary-General with a gender perspective that were submitted to the General Assembly, 50 reports (33%) did not include a section on conclusions and recommendations.

Figure VIII

Position of references to gender issues in reports of the Secretary-General to the Economic and Social Council

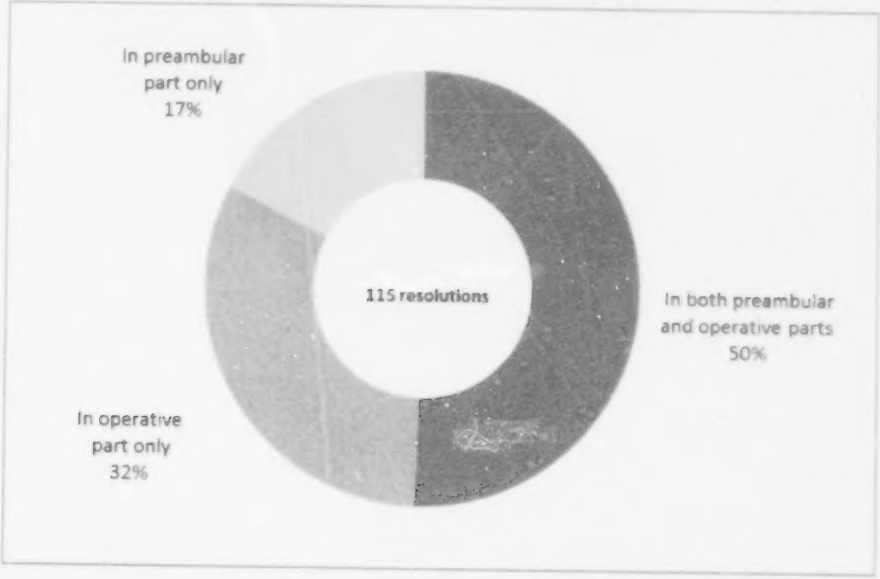


Note: Of the 13 reports of the Secretary-General with a gender perspective that were submitted to the Economic and Social Council, 5 reports (39%) did not include a section on conclusions and recommendations.

29. The analysis of the positioning of gender-related references in resolutions of the General Assembly and of the Economic and Social Council revealed that such references were most likely to be found in both the preambular and operative parts of resolutions (see figures IX and X). The second most likely scenario was the inclusion of a gender perspective in the operative part only, with no reference to gender in the preambular part. Few resolutions integrated a gender perspective in the preambular part only. These findings are consistent with those of past years.

Figure IX

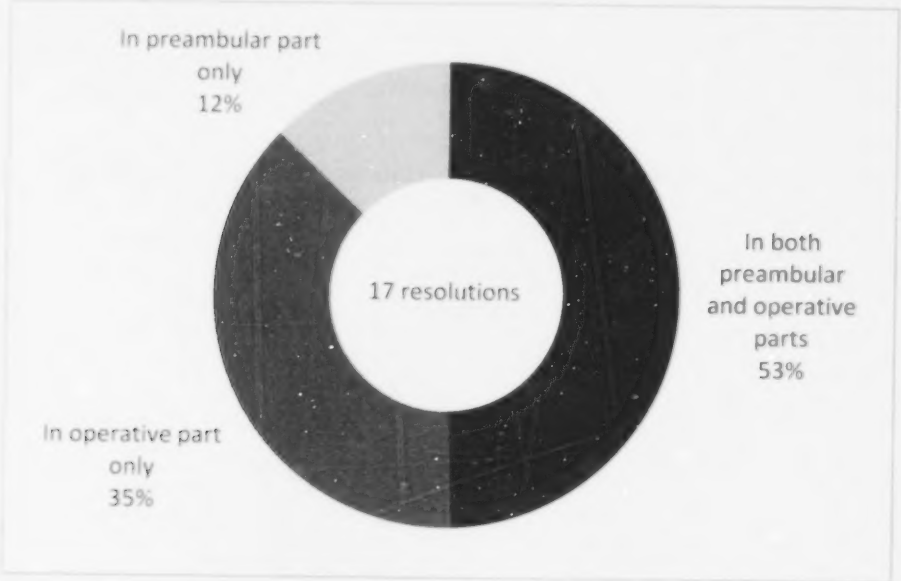
Position of references to gender issues in resolutions of the General Assembly



Note: 42 per cent or 115 out of the 275 resolutions of the General Assembly paid attention to gender issues. Of the 115 resolutions that integrated a gender perspective, one was a declaration (resolution 68/4) and thus did not have preambular and operative paragraphs.

Figure X

Position of references to gender issues in resolutions of the Economic and Social Council



2. Qualitative assessment

Methodology

30. Although gender perspectives may be reflected in key sections of a report or resolution, their impact depends on the strength of the analysis and language used. To assess this, reports of the Secretary-General and resolutions were reviewed against qualitative variables. Reports were assessed qualitatively against two variables: the "coverage" of gender equality issues and the "quality" of the gender equality discussion. This assessment reviewed only documents of the General Assembly, owing to the lack of relevant documents of the other intergovernmental bodies to support a similar analysis in a wider context.

31. Reports that included a specific section on gender equality issues, as well as several references throughout the rest of the report, were considered to have high coverage. A single reference or a few short references were defined as low coverage. Medium coverage fell somewhere in between. The quality analysis of reports characterized cursory references such as "including women" as low quality, while reports that provided precise facts, including quantitative data disaggregated by sex and/or gender analysis ranged from medium to high quality. Assessing the quality of such reports is an important step towards differentiating perfunctory references to gender-related terminology from more attentive analysis of gender equality issues.

32. For example, the following excerpts from a report on international migration and development were considered to be of high quality as they feature data disaggregated by sex ("Globally, the proportion of female migrants has remained relatively stable, moving from 49.1 per cent in 2000 to 48.0 per cent in 2013"), as well as gender analysis ("In countries of origin, migration can be an enabler of the

empowerment of girls and of gender equality — for example, by increasing girls' enrolment in school — primarily as a result of remittances sent home. Migration can also reinforce existing gender inequalities, however, if, in the absence of one or both parents, girls and boys are forced to assume responsibilities as primary caregiver or breadwinner ...") (A/68/190, paras. 27 and 67).

33. Another example of a document considered to be of high quality is the report of the Secretary-General on agricultural technology for development (A/68/308). The report not only had a section on smallholders and rural women, which provided data disaggregated by sex in regard to the agricultural labour force, but also discussed the situation and needs of women farmers in areas such as sustainable land management and water use, as well as emerging issues.

34. Resolutions were analysed against one variable only and categorized as having a low, medium or high focus on gender equality issues. Resolutions that included a single, passing reference were considered to have a low focus. Resolutions with a high focus on gender equality issues were identified by the occurrence of a keyword in more than one paragraph and/or by the inclusion of specific language on the situation and needs of women and girls and/or men and boys.

35. One example is General Assembly resolution 68/102 on the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations, which contains references to gender perspectives in multiple paragraphs. For example, in the preamble, the General Assembly reiterated the need for Member States, relevant United Nations organizations and other relevant actors to mainstream a gender perspective into humanitarian assistance, including by addressing the specific needs of women, girls, boys and men in a comprehensive and consistent manner. In paragraph 25, the Assembly encouraged efforts to provide education for all, especially for girls and boys, in humanitarian emergencies and in paragraph 39, the General Assembly urged all Member States to address gender-based violence in humanitarian emergencies.

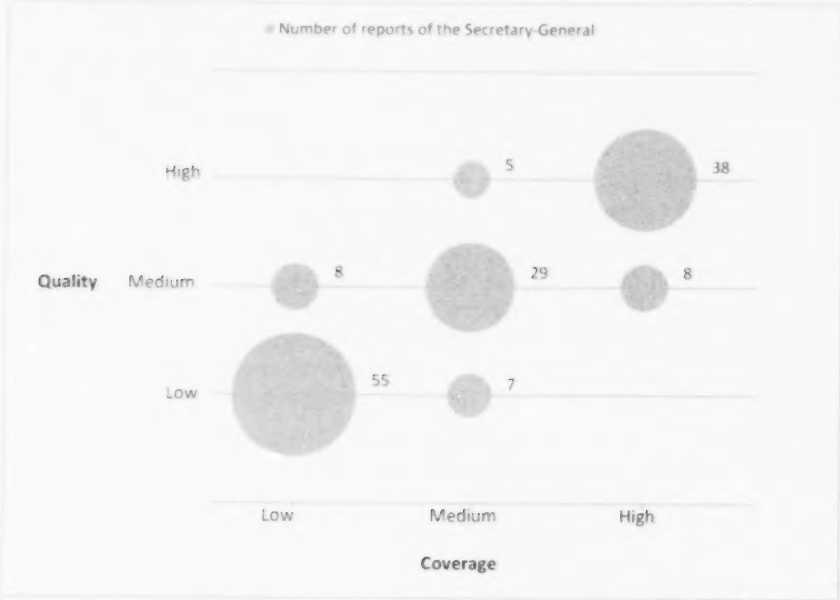
Reports of the Secretary-General

36. The distribution of the reports of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly across the two variables, coverage and quality, is illustrated in figure XI below. The distribution of reports across the two axes demonstrates that reports varied widely both in the coverage of gender equality issues and in the characteristics of these inclusions. There tended to be a general correlation between coverage and quality: reports that devoted little space to gender equality issues were also likely to have only superficial references, while reports with extensive coverage tended to include more precise information and deeper analysis. As in the sixty-seventh session, there were more reports with low coverage and of low quality (55 out of 151 reports) than reports with high coverage and of high quality (39 out of 151 reports).

37. The percentage of reports rated as high/high, medium/high or high/medium decreased to 34 per cent at the sixty-eighth session from 40 per cent at the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly. At the same time, the percentage of reports rated as low/low, medium/low and low/medium increased to 47 per cent at the sixty-eighth session, from 41 per cent at the previous session, while the percentage of reports in the middle spectrum (medium/medium) remained the same (19 per cent).

Figure XI

Coverage and quality of gender equality references in reports of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly, by frequency

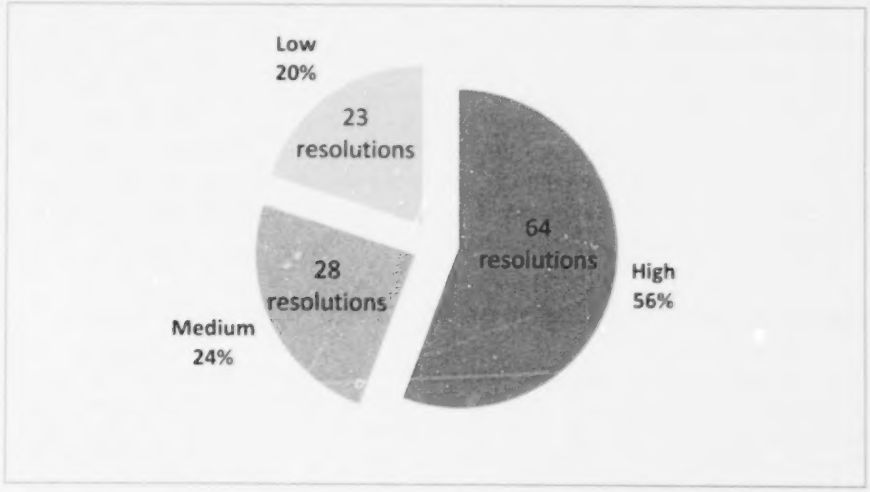


Resolutions

38. The 115 resolutions of the General Assembly (42 per cent) that included a gender perspective tended to do so in a fairly clear manner. Eighty per cent of those resolutions show a high or medium focus on gender equality issues (see figure XII). This means that the keywords indicating a gender perspective were found in more than one paragraph and/or that there was specific language on the situation and needs of, and opportunities for, women and girls and/or men and boys. This percentage is notably higher than that found in resolutions adopted during the sixty-seventh session (some 70 per cent), and suggests that most resolutions of the Assembly that include references related to gender perspectives reflect genuine attention to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Figure XII

Extent of focus on gender equality issues in General Assembly resolutions that include a gender perspective



39. Analysis of the extent of the focus on gender equality issues in General Assembly resolutions that include a gender perspective shows a significant increase in the percentage of high-focus resolutions, compared to the sixty-seventh session. While the share between low-, medium- and high-focus resolutions in 2012 was 28 per cent, 36 per cent and 36 per cent, respectively, in 2013 the low-focus share declined to 20 per cent and the medium-focus share to 24 per cent, while the high-focus share increased to 56 per cent, which is a very positive development.

40. Resolutions addressed gender equality issues in different ways, including general calls to integrate a gender perspective into the area under consideration; recognition that women and girls may be in positions of greater vulnerability than men and boys; and recognition of gender equality both as a goal in itself and as a means for progressing towards the goals of the subject matter under consideration. Resolutions called for the full, active and equal participation of women in decision-making, for the empowerment of women and girls, including economic empowerment, and for addressing discrimination and violence against women and girls. There were also calls for action to ensure women's and girls' access to resources, support and services. Some resolutions call for collecting data disaggregated by sex and gender-specific information.

41. Many of the medium- and high-focus resolutions included paragraphs expressing recognition of the specific contribution and situation of women and girls and/or containing proposals for actions to respond to their rights and needs. For example, in General Assembly resolution 68/11 on the situation in Afghanistan, the Assembly reiterated the importance of upholding international obligations for the advancement of women's rights, emphasized its commitment to achieving the full and equal participation of women in all spheres of Afghan life, condemned all incidents of discrimination and violence against women and girls, and recognized the special needs of girls. Another example is resolution 68/217 on sustainable mountain development, in which the Assembly underlined the need for improved

access to resources, including land, for women in mountain regions, as well as the need to strengthen the role of women in mountain regions in decision-making processes that affect their communities, cultures and environments, and encouraged Governments and intergovernmental organizations to integrate the gender dimension, including gender-disaggregated data, into mountain development activities, programmes and projects. Resolution 68/204 on the follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development provides a high focus, as the Assembly reaffirmed that gender equality and women's empowerment are essential to achieve equitable and effective development and sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth, and reiterated the need for gender mainstreaming in the formulation and implementation of development policies, including financing for development policies.

III. Contribution of the Commission on the Status of Women

42. As in previous years, the work of the Commission on the Status of Women was not included in the analysis of content covered in section II, in order to avoid biasing the results. The Commission's results during 2013 strongly confirmed that it is the unchallenged leader at the global level on issues of gender equality and the empowerment of women. As a deliberative, consensus-building and policymaking body, the Commission has primary responsibility for the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and a major role in promoting the strategy of gender mainstreaming. This leadership role is even more crucial as the target date for the Millennium Development Goals approaches; as Member States elaborate the post-2015 development agenda and sustainable development goals; and as all stakeholders intensify activities in commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women. The Commission will undertake a comprehensive review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in March 2015.

43. The Commission's work in 2013 focused on the elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls. The fifty-seventh session resulted in a commitment by Member States to take comprehensive action in five key areas to address this scourge and a road map for follow-up at the national level. Crucially, the Commission also emphasized that ending violence against women and girls is imperative for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and recommended that the realization of gender equality and the empowerment of women be considered as a priority in the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda. The substantive preparations by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), including mobilization and alliance-building, as well as leadership, expert and technical support during the session, were instrumental in enabling the adoption of the agreed conclusions.

44. Towards this outcome, UN-Women implemented a comprehensive strategy to prepare a strong substantive basis on the priority theme and to build broad-based support for strengthening normative standards. UN-Women mobilized Member States, the United Nations system, civil society and academic experts through a range of activities, including an expert group meeting, a global stakeholders' forum at United Nations Headquarters and regional consultations. The unprecedented scope and level of preparations laid the groundwork for the highly successful fifty-seventh session. Similar efforts were undertaken in preparation for the

Commission's priority theme of 2014, namely "Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls". Those efforts will be reflected in more detail in the next report of the Secretary-General on measures taken and progress achieved in follow-up to and implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, covering the work of the Commission in 2014.

IV. Factors accounting for the successful integration of a gender perspective into intergovernmental outcomes

45. The present section focuses on the work of the Second and Fourth Committees, examines the mechanisms through which they increased attention to gender perspectives in their work during 2013 and highlights lessons for the work of other bodies.

46. The percentage of resolutions of the Second Committee that integrated a gender perspective increased significantly for the second consecutive session, with 66 per cent of such resolutions adopted at the sixty-eighth session, 50 per cent at the sixty-seventh session and 33 per cent at the sixty-sixth session. For instance, a number of resolutions covering sustainable development and climate-related issues (such as 68/210, 68/212, 68/213 and 68/214); financial system and development (such as 68/201 and 68/204); science, technology and innovation for development (68/220); disaster risk reduction (68/211); agriculture (such as 68/209, 68/232 and 68/233); and human settlements (68/239) included sometimes extensive attention to gender equality issues. Resolutions highlighted, for example, the need for gender mainstreaming in the subject matter, recognized the role of gender equality in achieving particular results, and outlined actions for the empowerment of women in the area under consideration. The fact that the Second Committee adopted its biennial resolution on women in development (68/227) may have been an incentive to expand attention to gender perspectives in other areas of the work of the Committee. Recent work by the Commission on the Status of Women on science and technology (agreed conclusions of the fifty-fifth session, see E/2011/27-E/CN.6/2011/12) and on natural disasters (resolution 56/2), and of the General Assembly on the situation of women in rural areas (resolution 68/139) may likewise have been catalytic for this progress.

47. An example from the work of the Fourth Committee shows how gender perspectives can be brought to bear on technical issues, in this instance by focusing on the participation of women. Indeed, a focus on the participation of women can be a first and catalytic step towards bringing gender perspectives more systematically into technical discussions and issues. Resolution 68/75 on international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space, for the first time, notes the importance of the equal participation of women in all fields of science and technology and encourages the regional centres for space science and technology education to continue to promote greater participation of women in their education programmes.

48. Given that there was limited progress with regard to the attention given to gender perspectives in reports of the Secretary-General, the expanded collaboration between Member States and UN-Women during the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly may have been the key factor in influencing outcomes.

UN-Women undertook outreach in response to the call by the General Assembly, in its resolution 68/140, on the bodies of the United Nations system to increase efforts to fully mainstream a gender perspective into all issues under their consideration. The main findings of the previous report of the Secretary-General (A/68/175) were captured in a one-page infographic on the integration of a gender perspective into the work of the General Assembly and widely disseminated to draw attention to areas of progress and remaining gaps.

49. UN-Women highlighted, in particular, untapped opportunities for better reflecting gender equality issues in the work of the Second Committee. Delegations welcomed these efforts and requested technical support to increase the attention paid to gender equality issues in a number of resolutions. UN-Women also flagged opportunities for including gender perspectives in the work of the Fourth Committee, which were favourably received. The Entity's visible and proactive role in support of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, its engagement in the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development and its follow-up, as well as the work of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and other intergovernmental processes (see sect. V) through the provision of technical advice and inputs, briefing papers, the organization of side events and collaboration with stakeholders may also have contributed to increased commitment to addressing gender equality issues.

50. Such ongoing proactive outreach on the part of UN-Women facilitates the work of intergovernmental bodies and enables them to monitor the progress resulting from their efforts to mainstream a gender perspective in all sectors. Through its technical expertise on gender equality and the empowerment of women, UN-Women makes available evidence of the different situation of women and men and of discrimination against women, thereby helping to build momentum for greater attention to gender equality issues in the range of topics discussed in intergovernmental forums.

V. Integrating a gender perspective into intergovernmental processes, including the post-2015 development agenda: the role of UN-Women

51. During 2013, UN-Women built upon the foundations laid in previous years of engagement with a range of intergovernmental processes, and dedicated particular effort towards sustainable development and the post-2015 development agenda, climate change and small island developing States. Galvanized by this expanded support by the Entity, gender equality, the empowerment of women and the human rights of women and girls received increased attention in such processes, resulting in significant improvements in the global normative framework.

52. Efforts to accelerate action towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals gained further momentum from a special event convened by the President of the General Assembly to review progress made towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, on 25 September 2013. In resolution 68/6, Member States identified areas for key interventions, including with regard to ending poverty and hunger, universal access to primary education, child mortality, universal access to reproductive health, including maternal health, environmental sustainability and access to water and sanitation. The same event was also a stepping stone towards the

post-2015 development agenda, with Member States recognizing the intrinsic interlinkage between poverty eradication and sustainable development and underlining the need for a coherent approach to work towards a single universal framework and set of goals, applicable to all countries, which should also promote peace and security, democratic governance, the rule of law, gender equality and human rights for all. Member States launched a road map, which will culminate in a summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, to be held in September 2015.

53. UN-Women further intensified its contribution to the work of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals by providing technical support to Member States and contributing to United Nations system-wide efforts through the technical support team. The Entity focused especially on a goal on the achievement of gender equality, the empowerment of women and girls and the full realization of their human rights, and on enhancing gender perspectives across the entire range of focus areas under discussion within the Open Working Group. UN-Women presented six priority target areas that address specific structural barriers which are holding back progress for women and girls: (1) ending all forms of discrimination against women and girls in laws, policies and practices; (2) ending all forms of violence against women and girls in public and private spaces, including child, early and forced marriage; (3) realizing the sexual and reproductive health and rights of all women and adolescent girls throughout the life cycle; (4) recognizing, reducing and redistributing unpaid care work through shared responsibility between households, and between households and the State, through the provision of social services and infrastructure; (5) ensuring women's equal rights to: inheritance; access, control and own assets and productive resources, including land; access to and management of natural resources; and access to essential services and infrastructure; and (6) ensuring full, equal and effective participation and leadership of women in decision-making in the public and private spheres and in peace processes and transitional justice. At the same time, UN-Women made the case for gender-specific targets on means of implementation, including the collection, analysis and use of data disaggregated by sex and age for all targets across the framework, renewed investment in gender statistics and statistical capacity-building and gender-responsive financing for sustainable development. The Open Working Group concluded its work on 19 July 2014 and proposed a goal on achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls.

54. Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change continued discussions on the elements of a future universal climate change agreement, to be adopted in 2015. They are also considering decisions on climate change adaptation, mitigation, capacity-building, technology transfer and finance, among other issues. As all of these have important impacts on and consequences for women and girls, it is critical that gender equality perspectives be reflected in all decisions to be adopted.

55. The progress made by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in the past four years with regard to gender perspectives, especially in its decision 23/CP.18, adopted at the eighteenth session of the Conference of the Parties, on promoting gender balance and improving the participation of women in negotiations relating to the Conference of the Parties and in the representation of parties in bodies established pursuant to the Convention or to the Kyoto Protocol to the Convention provides a solid basis for

informing more effective climate change policy that addresses equally the needs of women and men (see FCCC/CP/2012/8/Add.3). Most importantly, based on that decision, gender equality is now a standing agenda item at the annual meetings of the Conference of the Parties, providing a strong institutional foundation for further work. The decision also strengthened UN-Women involvement in such processes, and the Entity is helping to accelerate momentum by engaging with parties to the Convention and other stakeholders in the preparations for the twentieth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, to be held in Peru in December 2014, on two key issues: to ensure that parties will provide guidance (for example, through a decision) on concrete follow-up actions regarding the implementation of decision 23/CP.18 and the conclusions of the mandated in-session workshop, held at the nineteenth session of the Conference; and to encourage reflection of gender perspectives in the discussions of parties as they elaborate a new climate change agreement, to be adopted in 2015. The United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, under the leadership of UN-Women, has also been singled out for recognition as an accountability framework for the United Nations system in mainstreaming gender equality and enhancing the gender expertise of staff of United Nations entities, including the secretariat of the Convention.

56. The work of UN-Women is expected to receive additional traction through the Leaders' Forum on Women Leading the Way: Raising Ambition for Climate Action, a high-level event the Entity is co-organizing with the Mary Robinson Foundation — Climate Justice, on 22 September 2014. The key messages from this multi-stakeholder event will inform the Climate Summit to be convened by the Secretary-General, on 23 September 2014.

57. UN-Women strengthened its engagement with the preparatory process for the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, to be held in Apia in September 2014. This engagement benefits from the experience and expertise of the Entity's multi-country offices in the Pacific and the Caribbean, as well as collaboration with civil society through the women's major group. UN-Women brought greater attention to gender equality issues through its contributions to issues briefs prepared by the United Nations system, and interventions at the meetings of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference. The Entity provided technical comments to the draft outcome document (A/CONF.223/3, annex) on issues relating to the transformative effect of gender equality and women's empowerment on sustainable development; the integration of a gender perspective in priority areas including women's economic empowerment; ending all forms of violence against women and girls; ensuring women's full, equal and effective participation and leadership in decision-making, guaranteeing equal access to good-quality education and health care; addressing the structural and socioeconomic inequalities and multiple intersecting forms of discrimination that affect women and girls; and giving women equal rights with men to economic resources, including access to, ownership of and control over land and other forms of property, credit and appropriate new technologies.

58. As other intergovernmental processes are being initiated or are accelerating, UN-Women is actively reaching out to stakeholders and providing the evidence to bring greater attention to gender equality issues. Among those are, in particular, the preparatory processes for the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, the third International Conference on Financing for Development, the second United

Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries, and the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III).

VI. Conclusions and recommendations

59. **Intergovernmental bodies are making progress in reflecting, in a more systematic manner, a gender perspective in their work. However, progress remains uneven across the different bodies. Resolutions of the General Assembly that included a gender perspective showed a solid upward trend, and those with a high focus on gender equality increased significantly. On the other hand, those adopted by the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions registered a downward trend. A gender perspective is still too seldom reflected in some areas of work, in particular in resolutions dealing with disarmament and related international security questions, political issues and decolonization, administrative and budgetary matters, international legal matters, crime prevention and criminal justice, and narcotic drugs. Targeted resolutions remain essential to further strengthen and deepen the global normative framework for gender equality and the empowerment of women. It is equally important, however, to mainstream a gender perspective into resolutions dealing with all other subject matters and thus integrate gender equality considerations as a cross-cutting issue in all areas under discussion.**

60. **A number of important intergovernmental processes are currently under way, including those on the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda and the development of a new climate agreement, at a time when Member States are also conducting the 20-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. These processes are closely related and will influence global and national policies on a wide range of issues, for years to come. It is therefore critical that these intergovernmental processes fully address gender perspectives so that women as well as men can benefit from their outcomes, and that inequality and discrimination against women is not perpetuated. Women's full, equal and effective participation and leadership at all levels is an important factor that can contribute to such outcomes.**

61. **While the percentage of reports of the Secretary-General reflecting a gender perspective to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly decreased very slightly, there was a significant increase in the number of reports to the functional commissions of the Council that considered gender equality issues. Although reports to the General Assembly had stronger gender analysis than in the previous session, their conclusions and recommendations do not yet systematically integrate a gender perspective.**

62. **The General Assembly may wish to:**

(a) **Reaffirm the relevance of gender mainstreaming, as a globally accepted strategy for promoting the empowerment of women and achieving gender equality, in all issues considered by its Main Committees and subsidiary bodies;**

(b) **Reiterate its call upon all intergovernmental bodies of the United Nations system to fully mainstream a gender perspective into all issues under**

their consideration and within their mandates, as well as in all United Nations summits, conferences and special sessions and their follow-up processes;

(c) Call upon States to ensure that intergovernmental processes, such as the second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries, the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, the third International Conference on Financing for Development, and the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) consistently address gender perspectives in their preparatory processes and outcomes; and also call upon States to ensure reflection of gender perspectives in the discussions of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change as they elaborate a new climate change agreement, to be adopted in 2015;

(d) Urge the Economic and Social Council and especially its functional commissions to intensify efforts to integrate gender perspectives into their work, noting in particular the lack of progress by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs;

(e) Welcome the inclusion of a stand-alone goal on achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls among the sustainable development goals, and ensure that gender equality, women's human rights and the empowerment of women are reflected in the post-2015 development agenda and that gender-sensitive targets and indicators are integrated into all goals of any new development framework;

(f) Call upon Governments and all stakeholders to continue to use national and regional preparations for the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action to identify and strengthen opportunities for mainstreaming a gender perspective in all sectors and in all areas of development, including in the elaboration of the post-2015 development framework;

(g) Request that reports of the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly and to the Economic and Social Council and their subsidiary bodies systematically address gender perspectives through the provision of data disaggregated by sex and age and gender analysis, and that conclusions and recommendations for further action address the situation and needs of women, girls, men and boys, so as to facilitate gender-responsive policy development;

(h) Encourage UN-Women to continue to raise awareness about opportunities to mainstream a gender perspective into the work of intergovernmental bodies and processes and provide technical assistance, at the request of Member States, on strengthening the gender perspective in resolutions and other outcomes of intergovernmental bodies.